The question that the Bill be read in Council was put to the House and adopted.

The Secretary read the title of the Bill.

The hon. Sir C. P. Ramaswami Ayyar :—" Sir, I request you to suspend the operation of Standing Order 39."

The hon. the President :—" I suspend the operation of the Standing Order."

The hon. Sir C. P. Ramaswami Ayyar :—" Sir, I move that clause 1 do stand part of the Bill."

* The hon. Khan Bahadur Muhammad Usman Sahib Bahadur :—" I second it."

The motion was put and carried and clause 1 was made part of the Bill.

The hon. Sir C. P. Ramaswami Ayyar :—" Sir, I move that the schedule do stand part of the Bill."

* The hon. Khan Bahadur Muhammad Usman Sahib Bahadur :—" I second it."

The motion was put and carried and the schedule was made part of the Bill.

The hon. Sir C. P. Ramaswami Ayyar :—" I move that the preamble do stand part of the Bill."

* The hon. Khan Bahadur Muhammad Usman Sahib Bahadur :—" I second it."

The motion was put and carried and the preamble was made part of the Bill.

The hon. Sir C. P. Ramaswami Ayyar :—" I move that the Bill be passed into law."

* The hon. Khan Bahadur Muhammad Usman Sahib Bahadur :—" I second it."

The motion was put and carried and the Bill was passed into law.

XIII

A BILL TO REPEAL THE MADRAS PLANTERS LABOUR ACT, 1903 (BILL No. 7 OF 1927).

* The hon. Khan Bahadur Muhammad Usman Sahib Bahadur :—" Sir, His Excellency the Governor in his opening address to the Legislative Council said that the Madras Government have decided to repeal the Planters Labour Act subject to the consent of the Government of India. The consent of the Government of India having been obtained, it is now my duty to introduce this Bill. It has been found that modern public opinion regards with disapproval the existence of such penal laws. Even in the colonies where Indian labour is employed there are no such provisions. Further, the Government of India repealed the Workmen's Breach of Contract Act last year. On account of this we find that we are unable to justify the retention of the Madras Planters Labour Act on the Statute Book which gives statutory control over labour only in two districts. For these reasons we thought that the best thing was to repeal the Act. Originally we

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thought of removing the penal provisions alone. In that case the principle features of the Act will disappear. Under the circumstances, Government came to the conclusion to repeal the whole Act. I move that the Bill to repeal the Madras Planters Labour Act of 1903 be read in Council."

The hon. Sir C. P. Ramaswami Ayyar :—" I second it."

* Mr. G. Harisarvottama Rao :—" Sir, with your permission I wish to clear up one point. I am a new Member and from the way in which the Bill is proceeding I am at a loss to know when I should rise to move an amendment which I want to make to this Bill. I want to be given an opportunity to move that in sub-clause (b) of clause 1 the figure ' 1927 be substituted for the figure ' 1930 '. I request you to give me an opportunity at the proper moment."

* The hon. the President :—" The hon. Member being new to the House, I may advise him that the proper time for him to put forward his amendment will be when the Bill is considered clause by clause. But since notice had been given that all the stages of the Bill would be gone through in one sitting the hon. Member is expected to give notice of his amendment so that there might be no objection. But since the hon. Member is new I may exercise my discretion at the proper time and excuse short notice."

* Mr. G. Harisarvottama Rao :—" Thank you, Sir."

* Diwan Bahadur M. Krishnan Nayar :—" Sir, the point raised by my hon. friend struck me also. This is the day when the Bill is introduced and its provisions are being discussed and one of its provisions is that the Act shall come into force on the 1st day of April 1930. 5 p.m.

" I think that is a principle which should be objected to at this stage of the Bill, i.e., when the Bill is being introduced and when the principles and details are being discussed. I take objection to the provision that the Act should come into force only on the 1st of April 1930. I can very well understand the hon. the Home Member's desire which is stated in the statement of objects and reasons that some time should be given to the industry, viz., the planting industry to adjust itself to the changing state of things so that its interests may not be prejudiced. It is quite reasonable that it should be given some time. But I think that three years' time from this date is not necessary to enable the planters to get over the difficulties that may arise. I think that six months will do. In any case one year from this date will be quite adequate for the planters. Three years seems to be quite unnecessary. It is practically taking away with one hand for a period of three years what is given by the other. If these defects will be rectified, I support the Bill."

Mr. J. A. Saldanha :—" Sir, I beg to point out that there are two parts in the Planters Labour Act. One part of it deals with penalties for breach of contract, etc. The other part of it is of a humanitarian character. It makes it compulsory that the planters should give the labourers amenities of life, such as, dispensaries, etc. This Bill goes so far as not only to cancel the penal provisions but also the humanitarian provisions. I shall have no objection to this Bill being read in Council if there is a guarantee that the Government or some hon. Member of this House would bring forward a Bill to retain the humanitarian provisions. . I myself sent a Bill to the Government three years ago with this object. The Government appointed a committee. As a result of the deliberations of the committee this Bill was drafted and

introduced. One condition the committee laid down before signing its report was that we should be allowed to bring about harmonious relations between the employees and the planters by means of a Bill. I may point out, Sir, that a large number of labourers in South Kanara and other districts will suffer otherwise. If this Bill is passed, it will deprive the labourers of the benefit of getting money from the employers without interest. The planters will not give any advance. I hope that a Bill will be brought forward in order to place the relations between both sides on a more harmonious footing so that both the parties will be benefited."

The motion that the Bill be read in Council was put and carried.

The Secretary then read the title of the Bill.

* The hon. Khan Bahadur MUHAMMAD USMAN Sahib Bahadur :—" As there is some difference of opinion among the hon. Members, I move that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee. The undermentioned hon. Members will constitute the Select Committee :—

Mr. K. R. Venkatarama Ayyar,
Rao Sahib R. Srinivasan,
Mr. C. R. T. Congreve,
Rao Bahadur K. Sitarama Reddi,
Mr. T. K. Chidambaranatha Mudaliyar,
Mr. J. A. Saldanha,
Mr. G. Harisarvottama Rao,
Mr. S. H. Slater,
Mr. C. V. Venkataramana Ayyangar and
The Mover."

The hon. Sir C. P. RAMASWAMI AYYAR :—" I beg to second the motion."

The motion was put and carried and the Bill was referred to the Select Committee.

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" Under Standing Order 40 (3) I appoint Mr. J. A. Saldanha as the Chairman of the Select Committee.

" Hon. Members may have noticed that starred questions to be answered on each day are printed and placed on the table of the House on the previous day, when the Council is sitting. I hope that the new system will be found to be more convenient than the old, by which hon. Members were given notice only of the numbers of questions."

The House then adjourned to meet again at 11 a.m. on Thursday, the 3rd instant.

R. V. KRISHNA AYYAR,
Secretary to the Legislative Council.